

of preventing its depression beyond recovery required the anxious consideration of the Government. The member therefore requested that the question of abolishing the export duty on tea and substituting in its stead the taxation of the profits of tea industry be given full consideration. He also said that, if necessary, a deputation of leading planters from all parts of the State would wait on the Dewan on any convenient date to discuss the question in all its bearings and settle details.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. St. George, I shall very gladly examine the question again, and meet a deputation of the planters either here or in Peermade or Munnar.

13. Grant of full rights over teak trees standing on registered holdings to the owners thereof.

MR. P. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Tiruvella taluk, Group II*) spoke about the need for the abolition of royalty on teak trees standing on private holdings. In olden days there were many articles of Government monopoly but the monopoly was subsequently abolished. Pepper was one such article. At the time when the monopoly on this article existed the ryots had not absolute right even over the lands on which pepper was grown. But in the year 1040 the absolute right over all *pandaravaka* lands was conferred on the ryots and along with that the royalty on pepper was also abolished. But to compensate for the loss of revenue on this account a duty was imposed on pepper exported. Cardamom was also till recently an article of Government monopoly. But this monopoly was also abolished during the time of Dewan V. P. Madhava Rao.

The disadvantages of imposing a royalty on teak trees were many. The roots of these trees were injurious to other plantations and their shade did not allow other trees to grow. The ryots were liable to prosecution if they lopped off the branches of teak trees. The felling of these trees also caused considerable damage to the boundary walls of the private holdings. In order to avoid these and similar inconveniences the ryots were in the habit of destroying young teak plants and not allowing them to grow. If this practice was continued, the private holdings, would, in a short time, be free of any teak trees and Government would have to suffer considerable loss of revenue. On the other hand, if full ownership over teak trees be granted to the ryots, they would try to rear and tend them carefully and even open new plantations. In order to compensate for the loss of revenue under *kudivila*, which the abolition of the royalty would entail, an export duty might be levied on teak logs as in the case of pepper. This revenue was sure to be more than that under *kudivila*. It might be noted that the teak logs were in great demand outside Travancore. There was no doubt that the Forest Department would object to this proposal. The main reason for the objection was perhaps the large income derived under *kudivila* on royal trees on private holdings, and the consequent loss of revenue by the abolition of royalty. Though there was a larger number of trees in

major reserved forests, their exploitation was not easy and hence the Forest authorities might attach more importance to trees on private holdings. This objection should not prevail in the interests of the welfare of the ryots. The need for the abolition of this royalty had been urged on the Government both through the Assembly and the Legislative Council. It was as a result of these representations that a committee to enquire into and report on this question was appointed. But nothing further was done. The question should therefore be taken up and disposed of early. It might be noted that in other Indian States, such as Mysore and Cochin, this royalty did not exist and that it was high time that it was abolished in Travancore also.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai, your representation will be considered.

14. Production of account books in courts.

MR. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Trading Classes, Kayankulam*) said that it was necessary that account books of merchants produced in courts were returned promptly. According to the practice in vogue, these books were retained in courts for one or two weeks. A formal stamped petition for the return of the books and a formal order by the presiding authority were necessary for the return of the books. Formerly, it was enough if a copy of the account required be produced with the original and on the filing of an unstamped petition the books, in original, used to be returned. This arrangement was most convenient to the merchants. The need for reviving this practice was represented at the 26th and 27th sessions of the Assembly and the Government stated that the matter was under consideration. The matter should be taken up without further delay and the grievances of the traders redressed.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Krishna Pillai, this question is still under the consideration of the High Court.

15. Defects in the administration of civil and criminal justice in Travancore and remedies therefor.

MR. C. R. RAMAN PILLAI (*Municipal Council, Tiruvalla*) said that much hardship was being experienced by the people on account of the administration of civil justice. Litigation was increasing day by day, especially with the rapid increase in the number of *chitties* and banks. While on this point the member said that there was no limit to the number of *chitties* in the State. No fresh *chitties* should be registered unless the intending foremen produced certificates as regards their position from leading men of the locality. Further, the antecedents of the foremen, especially in regard to the previous *chitties*, if any, conducted by them should be enquired into before new *chitties* were registered.